

## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following is a complete listing of the pending claims.

1. (Currently amended) A reagent system for substantially lysing red blood cells in a whole blood sample prior to leukocyte analysis, the reagent system comprising:
  - (a) a first reagent for substantially lysing the red blood cells in the whole blood sample, wherein the first reagent includes[[:] a saponin compound[;]] and an acid selected from the group consisting of a halogenated carboxylic acid[[s]], a phosphoric acid or and a combination[[s]] thereof; and
  - (b) a second reagent for quenching the activity of the first reagent, wherein the second reagent includes a base and has a pH value of about 8 to about 12.
2. (Original) The reagent system of claim 1, wherein the first reagent further includes a surfactant.
3. (Currently amended) The reagent system of claim 2, wherein the surfactant is selected from the group consisting of a non-ionic surfactant[[s]], a cationic surfactant[[s]] and a combination[[s]] thereof.
4. (Currently amended) The reagent system of claim 3, wherein the non-ionic surfactant is selected from the group consisting of an ethoxylated decylalcohol[[s]], an ethoxylated and propoxylated linear (C8 – C10) aliphatic alcohol[[s]], and a combination[[s]] thereof.
5. (Currently amended) The reagent system of claim 1, wherein the saponin compound is selected from the group consisting of saponin[[:]], heat-treated saponin, saponin modified by heating in the presence of a halogenated carboxylic acid, and a combination[[s]] thereof.

6. (Currently amended) A reagent system comprising:
  - (a) a reagent for lysing red blood cells; and
  - (b) a quench;

wherein the system is substantially free of compounds selected from the group consisting of:

  - i. dye;
  - ii. a combination of saponin and carboxylic acid;
  - iii. an acid selected from formic acid, acetic acid and mixtures thereof;
  - iv. a combination of saponin and sulphonic acid;
  - v. a cross-linking agent such as an aldehyde;
  - vi. an alkali metal salt of an alkyl sulfate anionic surfactant; and
  - vii. an ethoxylated long chain amine; and combinations thereof.
7. (Original) The reagent system of claim 6, wherein the reagent for lysing red blood cells includes a saponin compound and an acid.
8. (Currently amended) The reagent system of claim 7, wherein the saponin compound is selected from the group consisting of saponin[;], heat-treated saponin, saponin modified by heating in the presence of a halogenated carboxylic acid, and a combination[[s]] thereof.
9. (Currently amended) The reagent system of claim ~~8~~ 7, wherein the acid is selected from the group consisting of a halogenated carboxylic acid[[s]], a phosphoric acid ~~or~~ and a combination[[s]] thereof.
10. (Original) The reagent system of claim 9, wherein the reagent for lysing red blood cells further includes a surfactant.

11. (Currently amended) The reagent system of claim 10, wherein the surfactant is selected from the group consisting of a non-ionic surfactant[[s]], a cationic surfactant[[s]] and a combination[[s]] thereof.
12. (Currently amended) The reagent system of claim 11, wherein the non-ionic surfactant is selected from the group consisting of an ethoxylated decylalcohol[[s]], an ethoxylated and propoxylated linear (C8 – C10) aliphatic alcohol[[s]], and a combination[[s]] thereof.
13. (Currently amended) A method of lysing ~~the~~ red blood cells and stabilizing white blood cells present in a ~~sample~~ of whole blood sample, the method comprising the steps of:
  - (a) combining a predetermined portion of the ~~sample~~ of whole blood sample with a predetermined portion of a first reagent ~~for~~ to substantially lysing lyse the red blood cells in the whole blood sample, wherein the first reagent includes[[:] a saponin compound[[;]] and an acid; and
  - (b) quenching the lysing action of said first reagent by the addition of a predetermined portion of a second reagent to result in a solution containing leukocytes and substantially lysed red blood cells and having a pH value of about 3 to about 6, wherein the second reagent includes a base and has a pH value of about 8 to about 12 ~~to give a solution containing~~ ~~substantially lysed red blood cells, leukocytes and a pH value of about 3 to about 6.~~
14. (Currently amended) The method of claim 13, wherein the saponin compound is selected from the group consisting of saponin[[;]], heat-treated saponin, saponin modified by heating in the presence of a halogenated carboxylic acid, and a combination[[s]] thereof.

15. (Currently amended) The method of claim 14 13, wherein the acid is selected from the group consisting of a halogenated carboxylic acid[[s]], a phosphoric acid ~~or~~ and a combination[[s]] thereof.
16. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein the reagent for lysing red blood cells further includes a surfactant.
17. (Currently amended) The method of claim 16, wherein the surfactant is selected from the group consisting of a non-ionic surfactant[[s]], a cationic surfactant[[s]] and a combination[[s]] thereof.
18. (Currently amended) The method of claim 17, wherein the non-ionic surfactant is selected from the group consisting of an ethoxylated decylalcohol[[s]], an ethoxylated and propoxylated linear (C8 – C10) aliphatic alcohol[[s]], and a combination[[s]] thereof.
19. (New) A method of preparing a whole blood sample for leukocyte analysis, comprising the steps of:
  - (a) substantially lysing red blood cells in at least a portion of the whole blood sample by adding a predetermined portion of a first reagent, wherein the first reagent includes a saponin compound and an acid; and
  - (b) substantially quenching the lysing action of said first reagent by adding a predetermined portion of a second reagent, wherein said second reagent includes a base and has a pH value of about 8 to about 12.